

## THE FIRST DRUMMER.

English Quakers Seem to Have Been the Progenitors of the Race.

The rapid development of the commercial traveler system specifically belongs to our own days, but as to the origin there is some difference of opinion. One authority lays it down that the bagman of to-day—the "drummer," in American phraseology—is the immediate descendant of the old chapman, or peddler, or hawk. As these personages were known even in the time of Chaucer in this case the modern commercial can boast a very respectable ancestry.

Another antiquarian, however, in the Bookseller has another theory to propose. For this he brings the poet Southey as a witness. It is that the commercial travelers of to-day really date back to the Quakers of one hundred or one hundred and fifty years since. These persons, it is well known, were forced to wander throughout the country by persecution and ill treatment. They were then, as they are to-day, mostly good, honest men of business, and with the true commercial instinct they seem to have made a virtue of necessity, and during their wanderings to have made acquaintances as far as possible with the country tradesmen, to whom they often sold goods, watches, "camblets," and other articles. They seemed to have pushed their trade so vigorously that they obtained heavy orders, so much so that "the tradesmen in London stood idle," as one of the Quakers said, "while we filled our coffers."

One Thomas Greene, a Quaker preacher and only a laboring man, died worth some thousands of pounds made in this fashion. The speculation is both curious and interesting, however the matter may be decided.

## BANK OF ENGLAND FORGERIES.

They Are Almost Unknown Now, But Were Formerly Frequent.

There are very few forgeries now, but one hundred years ago they were rife. The first recorded instance of the forgery of a Bank of England note has a singular touch of romance about it, says the Strand Magazine. The forger was a linen draper at Stafford, named Vaughan, who, in the year 1758, employed several workmen to engrave different parts of a twenty pound sterling note, and when a dozen had been printed off he deposited them with a young lady to whom he was engaged to be married as a proof of his wealth; but the imposition was discovered, and Vaughan was hanged.

One of the cleverest imitations of a bank note was the work of a poor schoolmaster, who forged an entire note with pen and ink, and, sad to say, was hanged. John Mathieson, who was convicted for forging the watermark, offered to show the directors how it was done if he were pardoned, but they would not withdraw the prosecution. Singularly enough, forgeries first began to be frequent soon after the introduction of the one pound sterling note, and in April, 1802, Mr. Addington told the house of commons that the forgeries had increased so

alarmingly that seventy extra clerks were required at the bank merely to detect them.

## TRADITION OF THE HORSESHOE.

How It Came to Be a Protection Against Evil Spirits.

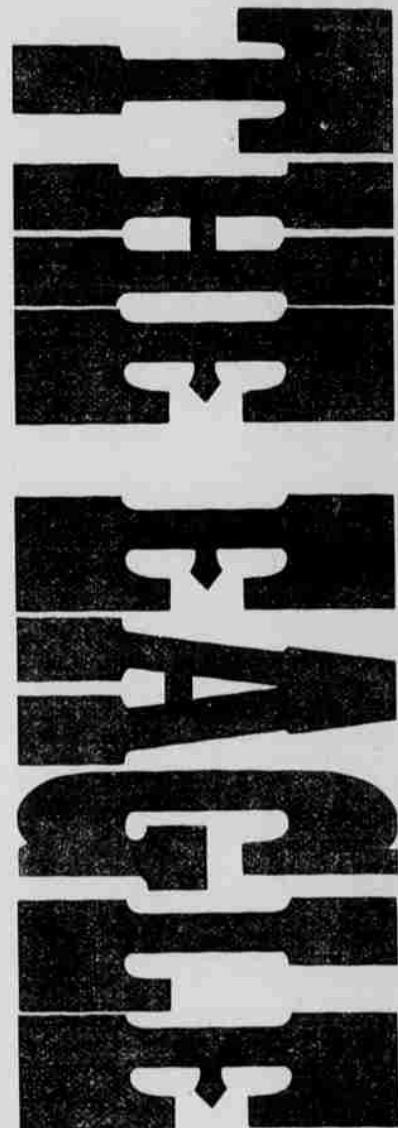
In Morocco iron is considered a great protection against demons, who are the lineal representatives, after all, of the hostile spirits. Hence it is usual to place a knife or dagger under a sick man's pillow, his illness, of course, being attributed to demoniacal possession. In India, records a writer in Cornhill Magazine, the mourner who performs the necessary but somewhat dangerous duty of putting fire into the dead man's mouth carries a key or a knife in his hand, to keep off the evil spirits. In short, a bit of iron is a very useful thing to have about you at any time if you desire to escape the unfavorable attention of the ghosts, the trolls, the fairies and the demons generally. This is a good reason for buying a pocketknife. It is also a reason for nailing up a horseshoe. "But why a horseshoe in particular?" you ask. "more than any other odd piece of iron?" Well, primarily, the good luck depends more upon the iron as iron than on the special shape or function of the horseshoe as a horseshoe.

But there are also many reasons why the superstition should happen to fix itself more particularly upon horseshoes. We must remember that in Europe, at least, it is the cattle, the horse and the domestic beasts in general that are specially liable to the hostile attacks of "the little people." Therefore the elves and trolls are most likely to be dreaded on farms or in the country, where horses and cattle most do congregate. Now, if you want to nail up a bit of iron as a protection against the fiery darts of the evil ones on your stables or cowhouses (which is the place where one oftenest sees them), nothing is more likely to come handy to your purpose than a cast horseshoe. Besides, it has obvious congruity for the place and object, and it can be readily picked up in the roads almost anywhere. Furthermore, it is provided beforehand with convenient holes, by means of which you can readily hang it up, either over your own house door or over your sheds and stables. The various advantages of cheapness, ease and readiness for fixing would have given the horseshoe a fair start in life. It is believed, as a charm against fairies, trolls and evil spirits generally, even without any other more special advantages.

## The Jeweler's Carat.

The carat is a standard used by the jewelers to express both weight and fineness. When it is used as a weight it is equal to four grains, or the one hundred and twentieth part of an ounce troy. In determining the fineness of precious metals, twenty-four carats is considered the highest standard of purity. According to this standard an eighteen-carat gold ring contains three parts of gold and one of some base metal.

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